

An unpublished opinion of the North Carolina Court of Appeals does not constitute controlling legal authority. Citation is disfavored, but may be permitted in accordance with the provisions of Rule 30(e)(3) of the North Carolina Rules of Appellate Procedure.

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NORTH CAROLINA

No. COA26-143

Filed 16 September 2026

Cleveland County, No. 24JT000154-220

IN THE MATTER OF:

A.M.D.A.

A Minor Juvenile.

Appeal by respondent from order entered 14 November 2025 by Judge Justin K. Brackett in Cleveland County District Court. Heard in the Court of Appeals 8 September 2026.

Keith W. Rigsbee for petitioners-appellees, no brief.

Caulder & Valentine Law Firm, PLLC, by Jonathan Kidd for attorney-advocate GAL, no brief.

Miller & Audino, LLP, by Jeffrey L. Miller, for respondent-appellant father.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent-appellant (Father) appeals from the termination of parental rights order as to his child, A.M.D.A.¹ Father's counsel has filed a no-merit brief under Rule

¹ A pseudonym.

3.1(e) of our Rules of Appellate Procedure. Under Rule 3.1(e), counsel filing a no-merit brief is required to “identify any issues in the record on appeal that arguably support the appeal and must state why those issues lack merit or would not alter the ultimate result.” N.C. R. App. P. 3.1(e).

Here, Father’s counsel has fully complied with all the requirements of Rule 3.1(e) and identified as an issue for our independent review: whether the evidence was sufficiently clear and convincing to support the trial court’s findings of fact, and whether the findings of fact were sufficient to support the trial court’s conclusion of law and adjudication that Father willfully abandoned the juvenile. This Court conducts an independent review of the issues raised in the no-merit brief. *In re L.E.M.*, 372 N.C. 396, 402 (2019). “[T]he text of Rule 3.1([e]) plainly contemplates appellate review of the issues contained in a no-merit brief.” *Id.*

We have reviewed this issue raised by Father’s counsel and “are satisfied that the trial court’s order terminating Father’s parental rights is supported by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence and is based on proper legal grounds.” *In re K.M.S.*, 380 N.C. 56, 59 (2022). Accordingly, we affirm the trial court’s order.

AFFIRMED.

Panel consisting of Judges WOOD, GRIFFIN, and FREEMAN.

Report per Rule 30(e).